YANKEE NEWS.

Bricks.—We find in the *Portsmouth Journal* (U. S.) a notice of the process of making bricks by steam practised at the establishment of Messrs. Woodworth and Moore, of Boston. The clay is ground up, pulverized, and bolted as fine as meal. In this state, entirely dry except moistening the moulds to prevent adhesion, the clay is turned into eight boxes of the size of bricks, and they undergo a pressure of six hundred tons. The machinery then raises the bricks and pushes them forward while the moulds are filling; and then another revolution produces eight more. Seven revolutions are made in a minute, producing fifty-six bricks, so hard when taken from the machine that wheelbarrow loads of eighty are packed up together without marring them in the least. The bricks, says our authority, come from the kiln with a beautiful, smooth, and straight surface, equal to any pressed bricks we have seen brought to our market. With this machine twenty men can make thirty thousand bricks in a day. There being no evaporation, the burning can be made with a great saving of fuel.

Artificial Leather.—A steam engine of six or eight horse power is erected at Abington, Mass., for grinding up the chips and shavings of leather which are cut off by the shoe and boot-makers, and which have heretofore been burnt or thrown away. These are ground to a powder resembling coarse snuff, and this powder is then mixed with certain gums and other substances, so thoroughly that the whole mass becomes a kind of melted leather. In a short time this dries a little, and is rolled out to the desired thickness—perhaps one twenty-fourth of an inch. It is now quite solid, and is said to be entirely water-proof.

Galvanic Printing Press.—A patent is being taken by a Mr. Foreman for a printing press, moved and regulated by galvanic magnets. His paper works upon a reel, and is continuous, like the telegraphic coil. The paper passes over the type on a cylinder, and when one side is worked the paper is reversed, and the other side printed with a perfect register, and the sheets are clipped apart as they come from the press by an ingenious contrivance. According to American authorities, "There is no limit hardly to the speed at which this press will work: its exactness is beyond anything known in this line of machinery; and, what is better than all, Mr. Foreman says he can put up the largest sized press at a cost of not more than 500 dollars." Mr. Foreman is a practical printer, and at present a citizen of New Boston, Illinois.

Boston v. New York.—The following statement of the relative wealth of Boston and New York has been circulated:—The population of Boston by the late United States census is 138,788: the real and personal estate as established by the late State valuation, is 213,310,067 dollars; making for each inhabitant of Boston the sum of 1,537 dollars. The population of New York by the United States census is 515,394: the valuation of the real and personal property, as ascertained the present year, is 320,108,358 dollars; making for each inhabitant of that city the sum of 621 dollars.

Art-Patronage.—The newspapers are calling on the States to give enlarged encouragement to art. The *Home Journal* says, in an article on the subject:—"Every State capitol should pay honour to the names that throw a special lustre upon the local sovereignty to which they have belonged. Something in this way has already been done—by none more than by Virginia. Years ago, while Washington lived, she secured a life-like impersonation of her great son, by sending to France for the services of Houdon; and the figure that now stands in her public hall at Richmond, is a treasure of memory and of art which all the other treasures of the world could not buy from her. She has lately, also, given an order to Crawford for a colossal group illustrative of the fame of the State—consisting of an equestrian statue of Washington, surrounded at its base by statues of six other Virginians—Marshall, Henry, &c. Besides the several States, it is an appropriate and legitimate object of the expenditure of cities to decorate the squares and public buildings with the figures of those exalted persons who, in past times, have made such cities the particular theatres of their reputation. Why has nothing been done in this way by New York? There once stood in the Exchange a statue of Hamilton, which was destroyed by fire. Why has it not been replaced? There ought to be in this New York of ours, upon the summit of a pillar, visible widely over the waters, a figure which should announce to the European that he is about to tread the land of Washington. There ought to be in our streets and parks statues to remind us all that we dwell upon a soil once dignified—for ever benefited—by the virtue, the learning, the ability, the patriotism of Hamilton, of Jay, of Schuyler, of Livingston, of Hobart, of Kent. If orders were given by our municipal and state authorities for works that are properly required for the adornment of our cities, and called for by the duty which the public representatives owe to the memory of the "great men" that "have been among us," our artists would find all the patronage that they could require, and art in this country would soar far beyond the level it has ever yet attained."

A Gas Engine to supersede steam.—The Cincinnati papers state that a Mr. Solomans, of that city, has invented a gas engine, which is to supersede steam. "With common whiting, sulphuric acid, and water he generates the gas. Five dollars' worth of these materials," says the *Nonpareil*, "will serve to propel a boat across the ocean half a dozen times, and if there be no leakage it will keep the boat in motion until it wears out. . . . The result is, that it requires 1,800 dols. of expense to run a boat from Cincinnati to New Orleans and back again, with the old engine, while this one will do the same work for 50 dols. Mr. Solomans has his engine in operation. It is of 25-horse power, and raises 12,000 pounds up and down five times in a minute. He has it so planted that its power may be seen. The engine is so constructed as to be self-sustaining, manufacturing and pumping its own gas, while a small furnace, almost half as large as a common furnace for heating flat-irons, furnishes all the heat he desires. A handful of charcoal does the work, and his boiler is about as large as a good sized cannon-ball." The carbonic acid gas engine itself is no great novelty: neither is this mode of generating gas. One main element of power in the present instance is heat, 20 degrees of which are said to give a pressure of 1,080 lbs., 40 degrees 2,160 lbs., 80 degrees 4,320 lbs.: that is, 132 degrees less than boiling heat gives a greater power with this gas than 452 gives by converting water into steam.

BLACKFRIARS AND WESTMINSTER BRIDGES.

It is held, to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Now, come what may to these two great public structures it never can be said your columns have been closed against such warnings. In Mr. Walker's evidence taken before a committee of the House of Commons, July 1850, he says, "Supposing for a moment we have next winter, or any winter, a great mass of ice coming down the river, I would not be answerable it would not sweep away all the piles," and down with them the bridge (Westminster) would assuredly fall. Should that happen, what then becomes of Blackfriars? It has been further stated that the bed of the river in that part has lowered six feet since the last great repair: if that be so, let any one turn to the soundings accompanying Mr. Page's report in 1846, and they will then be fully satisfied the alarm now expressed is not without reason. Committees have been sitting at intervals during the last seven years; evidence of the highest character been brought forward; and this year a royal commission has been appointed doubtless with a view of considering the evidence produced before these commissioners, and yet nothing has been done: the apathy of public authorities is really surprising: two more important thoroughfares connected with the traffic of the metropolis there cannot be, and yet in the face of the evidence quoted, we must encounter the risk of another winter. It would almost seem the delay was for the purpose of carrying out the scheme of a temporary bridge at Westminster, or it may be in the hope of the bridge being carried away, and thus to compel the immediate use of Charing-cross and Vauxhall bridges, thereby habituating the people of Westminster to the change of traffic, and paving the way for the scheme of the double bridges suggested in 1846. A. Z.

ENCROACHMENTS IN ST. PANCRAS.

I presume that the state of our principal thoroughfares is a subject deserving of your notice: therefore I beg to call your attention to the New-road and City-road, from Trinity Church eastward. For many years past I have observed with great regret the progressive encroachments on the gardens in front of the houses, particularly in those parts near the end of Tottenham-court-road, by the erection of shops, &c., close upon the footway; so that this once open thoroughfare is now contracted into the dimensions of an ordinary street; excluding in a great degree the air and view, and destroying its proper and distinguishing character as a kind of Boulevard.

The increasing value of the frontage for the purposes of trade is obviously the inducement to these erections, and it would be useless to urge against this *private* advantage the consideration of the *public good*. I had, therefore, observed and deplored the growth of this evil as uncontrollable, and without remedy. I was surprised, however, to find that it has been contemplated and provided for by express legislation. The Act 7 Geo. 4, for consolidating the metropolitan roads distinctly prohibits the erection of any building within 50 *feet of the New-road*, or within 40 *feet of the City-road, on any new foundation*. Unfortunately a subsequent Act transfers the management of these roads to the parishes through which they pass, since which this salutary provision has become a dead letter.

Such a result is not to be wondered at when you consider how the vestries are constituted; some of the members probably being the transgressors, and the majority unwilling to incur any expense in litigation: at all events, the fact is that these encroachments have been steadily advancing, and during the last year or two at a greatly increased rate; so that if some other authority do not interfere, the mischief will go on extending, until this once fine thoroughfare will be converted and degraded into an ordinary street.

Whilst such large sums are being expended in public *improvements*, widening streets, and creating new lines of communication, surely it is most inconsistent and unreasonable to allow this *counter improvement*, or nuisance, to take effect under our eyes, particularly when means have been provided to prevent it; but such is actually and unfortunately the fact.

Some years ago it was proposed to buy up and remove the public-house which projects so awkwardly at the corner of the New-road, and Hampstead-road; but now it is become only one or part of a mass of obstructions, too large to be *bought*, and being illegal, ought no longer to be tolerated. I hope, Mr. Editor, that you will assist in arousing the public to the assertion of their rights: then I have no doubt that they will prevail against the apathy or private interests of the local authorities.

F. B. A.

It may not be irrelevant to advert to a specimen of *parochial* administration, as now exhibited to the annoyance of the public in a part of the New-road. The wood pavement has been allowed to become so bad that a barricade was erected, and her Majesty prevented from passing that way in her progress to the Great Northern Railway station; and it still remains closed, without even the *commencement of repair*! At the same time it appears that the vestry have been making an abortive attempt to *extend* their jurisdiction over the roads and pavements by a Bill to supersede the whole of the seventeen boards of commissioners by whom they are at present managed, with the exception of the New-road, and some other portion of small extent.

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